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SEABEE

UNITED STATES NAVY | SPRING 2011



'Bees Construct Critical Infrastructure in Afghanistan

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SEABEE

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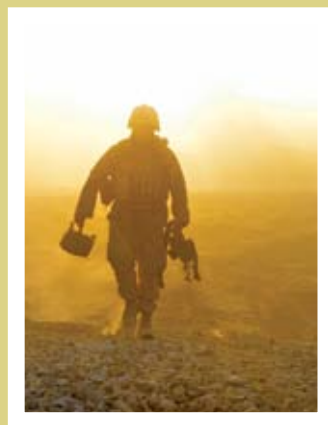


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NMCB 18 fortification efforts help drive out Taliban



ON THE COVER

CM3 Ty Ramsey, NMCB 40, a member of the Seabee team that fortified and secured a remote COP, finishes a long day of work, Khavejeh Molk, Afghanistan.

Photo by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

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Look for the Challenge Coin award in this issue!

CAN DO!





Seabees from NMCBs 18, 26 and 40 fortify and secure a remote COP in a small village, Khavejeh Molk, Afghanistan. The village is used as a patrol base for the U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment. Joint forces are now able to restrict movement of Taliban insurgents and help secure the self-governing efforts in Afghanistan.

Photo by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

You don't need to speak English to understand "Can Do." Across the globe, into harm's way in some areas and greeted with open arms in others, the Seabees have taught the world that Can Do is a universal term for making just about anything better...sans one thing.

Deep in the heart of Taliban country, Seabees relentlessly remind those who wish to oppress freedom that Can Do is not their friend. Can Do is fearless, steadfast and, worse yet, welcome by those the Taliban wish to rule. For the Taliban, Can Do probably ranks right up there with a few choice words in our language that we use to describe things we detest, fear or loathe.

After all, Can Do is the reason for so much misery and pain – to the Taliban. When the Marines needed better roads, bunkers, building and structure to persuade the Taliban to leave Afghanistan, who do you think the Taliban blamed? When the British or Canadians needed outposts built, or when the Army wanted barriers, cover or roads extended, who do you think did the work? When military forces throughout the region need something built a little bigger, better or farther, who else has the capability, willpower and sustainment skills to give the theater commanders what they need? The Seabees.

The spring issue of *Seabee Magazine* provides a detailed look at just how much impact Seabees are having in Afghanistan. In fact, our spring 2011 *Seabee* Challenge Coin recipient, MCC (NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins, NMCB 40, addresses this very topic with meaningful words and compelling imagery.

Can Do, for those who welcome it, soothes the soul. It brings hope, freedom and safety to a community, a village or a nation. It builds schools and medical facilities, brings in fresh water and improves sanitary systems for those who have done their best with limited resources. Seabees improve things; it's an almost involuntary impulse, and certainly not one we're immune to here at the magazine.



MCC(SCW/EXW/SW/AW/SG)
James G. Pinsky

In April 2010, we launched *Seabee* on Facebook and Twitter to maximize our reach to all audiences. The move then seemed prudent, if not trendy, and history has validated our logic. We've reached new audiences, made access to content easier, and opened up the ability to showcase video and real-time interaction throughout the Seabee Nation. We here at *Seabee* especially love interacting with our retired 'Bees across the world who are very much engaged in the care and future of today's Seabee warrior. As such, we've migrated our more time-sensitive news and information, as well as some of our other sections, from the quarterly confines of our print publication to our online presence on Facebook. In fact, the site has been so successful that Seabee spouse Stacy Molzhon volunteered to keep up with the demand on Facebook. She's been a tremendous addition – thank you, Stacy.

But that's not to say our level of attention and care to the print publication has diminished. In fact, *Seabee Magazine* recently took top prize in the U.S. Navy's Chief of Information (CHINFO) 2010 Merit Awards Competition. Our first-place win in the magazine format category is a direct reflection of the outstanding men and women of the Seabees, our families, friends and supporters. Thank you for all of your help. We're honored to share this recognition with you. And speaking of outstanding...a few Seabee contributors also received individual CHINFO awards in other categories; read about their achievements inside these pages.

Finally, we'd like to wish all of our Seabee brothers and sisters a Happy 69th Birthday. Our Chief and the MCPON both have special birthday messages for you in this issue.

Don't expect a card from the Taliban.

MCC (SCW/EXW/SW/AW/SG) James G. Pinsky
Editor-in-Chief, *Seabee Magazine*

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WE BUILD WE FIGHT.

SEABEE
UNITED STATES NAVY

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EDITORIAL

SEABEE Magazine is scheduled quarterly by the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Public Affairs Office from the historic Washington Navy Yard, "the Quarterdeck of the Navy." Our readership consists of Active and Reserve Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) officers and their families, as well as veterans, retirees and the general public. Letters and electronic mail are welcome on all Seabee-related topics and, if published, are subject to editing for length and clarity. Written and photographic submissions that show Active and Reserve Seabees are strongly encouraged. We prefer to receive all written and photographic submissions by e-mail to seabeesmagazine@navy.mil. Images should include captions and be unmodified; digital files should measure at least 300dpi at 5x7 inches. All submissions must include the author's full name, rank/rate, duty contact telephone number(s) and e-mail address. Submissions by regular postal mail are strongly discouraged due to security precautions that may damage fragile contents. If necessary, send all postal mail to:

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FROM THE MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY MCPON(SS/SW) RICK D. WEST



MCPON(SS/SW) Rick D. West greets HM1 Starla Martin, 3NCR, Kandahar, Afghanistan.
Photo by MCC(SW) Terrina Weatherspoon



Seabee Tough: Giddy Up, Shipmates!

'Bees,

For 69 years our Navy Seabees have been protecting the nation and serving the U.S. Navy with pride and outstanding dedication. You, the men and women of the Seabees, have been engaged globally, constructing bases, building airfields, roads, bridges and other support facilities, as well as below the world's oceans and waterways conducting underwater construction. Seabees play a very essential role in supporting the Fleet and Combatant Commands while carrying out our Navy's maritime strategy.

I've had the opportunity to visit 'Bees all around the world from your bases in Gulfport and Port Hueneme, to the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan, and to the Western Pacific. I'm always inspired by your determination and esprit de corps, whether in combat, humanitarian relief missions, or helping to build communities or nations. You live your motto 'Seabees Can Do,' and on my recent trip to the Central Command Area of Responsibility I witnessed this firsthand.

Both active and reserve battalions in CENTCOM are working vigilantly together as one team, a total force, to clear existing roads, build new routes, drill water wells, construct forward operating bases, command outposts, observation posts and watchtowers, all while trying to keep the enemy at bay. The Seabees' ongoing efforts to partner with Afghanistan National Army units to build their capacity and capability, in order to ultimately transfer responsibility for the protection of the civilian population to Afghan forces, and show the people that their government is in control, is absolutely amazing.

Seabees, you continue to answer our nation's call to build and fight, provide needed humanitarian assistance, and win the hearts and minds of local communities, governments and organizations through community relations projects throughout Africa, Europe, South America and the Pacific theater. Your efforts prove our great Navy is a Global Force for Good, and I am proud of you.

Thank you for what you do every day and for your continued service and dedication to our nation and our Navy.

Happy Birthday and OOOORAH 'Bees!

Very Respectfully,
MCPON (Honorary Seabee)



“CAN DO” IN



Afghanistan

“ Seabees are the rock stars of the Afghanistan build-up.”

Adm. Gary Roughead, USN
Chief of Naval Operations

'Bees Complete More Than 625 Projects for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2010

By Daryl Smith, Public Affairs Officer, 1NCD

As part of President Barack Obama's deployment of **30,000 additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan in 2009**, with the goal to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al Qaeda, the Seabees provided two more battalions to the two already deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Seabees were sent to operate in a joint environment and construct critical infrastructure in Afghanistan for incoming Marines and Soldiers, including combat outposts (COPs), forward operating bases (FOBs) and force protection improvements such as guard towers and bunkers.

As 2009 came to a close, the 30th Naval Construction Regiment (30NCR) concluded its deployment to Afghanistan. The regiment served as Commander, Task Force Forager, a major subordinate command under U.S. Forces Afghanistan and Regional Command South (RC-South), where they directed the construction and expansion of various COPs and FOBs in support of four brigade-size maneuver commands and one infantry battalion. They led more than 4,500 Navy, Army and Air Force general and combat engineers, including three Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs), two Army Engineer Battalions, one expeditionary Red Horse Squadron, and several Army and Air Force facilities engineer teams.

During their deployment, 30NCR executed 336 projects that directly supported President Obama's surge strategy and contributed to the expansion of RC-South from eight to 24 FOBs and COPs. Their accomplishments included constructing more than 2.1 million square feet of berthing and command and control space, 18.7 miles of new force protection berms and barriers, 333,050 square feet of airfield matting, 19 million square feet of horizontal site preparation and drainage, and six water wells providing more than 300,000 gallons of water per day. The regiment also provided leadership to an Army Route-Clearance Battalion

that traveled more than 110,000 km in five provinces, where 130 Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and pieces of unexploded ordnance were found and more than 100 detonations were performed.

When 22NCR arrived to relieve 30NCR, they faced a massive job. Normally, a regiment executes command and control of two or more engineering battalions. The 22NCR synchronized the operations of combat and general engineers, supporting seven brigade-level maneuver elements as one of two theater engineering assets supporting the International Security Assistance Force Joint Command Mission. The number of units they commanded would normally be performed by two regiments or a brigade.

Task Force Alliance (TFA) led the engineer efforts in one of the fastest theater expansions in U.S. Central Command's (USCENTCOM's) history, earning a role as the key integrator, driving combat-enabling tactical infrastructure development across half of the region's commands in Afghanistan. TFA led a joint task force throughout this historic engineering effort, completing high-priority tactical infrastructure directly enabling the surge of 17,000 uniformed personnel, adding to more than 60,000 personnel engaged in combat and counter-insurgency operations across half of Afghanistan. They coordinated contingency



30NCR executed 336 projects supporting the surge strategy, including 18.7 miles of force protection berms and barriers, 333,050 square feet of airfield matting and six water wells.

22NCR helped complete more than 375 projects on 30+ FOBs, 23 command and control facilities, and 28 deep aquifer wells providing more than 1.6 million gallons of water per day.



(Opposite and right) Seabees from NMCBs 18, 26 and 40 fortify and secure a remote COP in a small village, Khavejeh Molk, Afghanistan. During their deployment, 30NCR executed 336 projects that directly supported the surge strategy and contributed to the expansion of RC-South from eight to 24 FOBs and COPs.

Photos by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

'Bees Complete More Than 625 Projects for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2010 [continued]

operation planning and design requirements through a 6,100-person joint engineer force comprised of three Army Engineer Battalions, four NMCBs, two Air Force Squadrons, one Marine Corps Airfield Engineer Detachment and Department of Defense (DoD) civilians.

Under the leadership of 22NCR, TFA completed more than 375 projects on 30-plus FOBs, 23 command and control facilities, two rotary wing expeditionary airfields totaling more than 1.4 million square feet of AM2 matting, 28 deep aquifer water wells providing more than 1.6 million gallons of water per day, tactical bridging installation on key transportation routes, 250 acres of life support areas, multiple helicopter landing zones, more than 180,000 feet of berthing facilities capable of housing up to 24,000 personnel and three aircraft runways totaling more than 337,500 square feet, along with other force protection and facility improvements for key Afghanistan government officials. Route clearance engineer battalions completed more than 1,900 missions, clearing more than 127,000 km of key transportation routes, resulting in clearing more than 4,100 suspected and confirmed IEDs. They also completed the buildup and expansion of four FOBs in support of the 2/101st Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

The 22NCR was then relieved by 3NCR. As commander of Task Force Keystone, they led more than 5,300 Navy, Army and Air Force general and combat engineers, including four NMCBs, three Army Engineer Battalions, one Air Force Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron, and several Army and Air Force Facilities Engineer Teams.

They executed more than 421 projects that completed the force uplift expansion efforts at more than 25 FOBs and COPs,

and provided critical tactical infrastructure enabling RC-South to conduct deliberate combat operations in the Horn of Panjwari, Arghandab River Valley and Zhari. 3NCR's accomplishments included constructing 32 combat outposts, 15 watch towers, six strong points, vehicular blocking positions and three expeditionary gap crossings; completing 18 road improvement missions; improving 35 km of communication lines; drilling 29 deep aquifer water wells; installing 15 bridges; and completing numerous FOB improvement projects. The regiment deployed a forward element pivotal to the kinetic clear and hold operations of Hamkari and Sagin River Valley.

3NCR also provided leadership to two Army route clearing battalions that traveled more than 359,000 km in five provinces. During these convoys, 533 IEDs and pieces of unexploded ordnance were intercepted and 318 detonations were conducted.

Seabee efforts were not limited to the south, as another large project took place in northern Afghanistan. NMCB 4 was the first U.S. engineering unit to have broken ground in the region, and they were later relieved by NMCB 40. Deemed the largest earth-moving operation undertaken by a single battalion since World War II, Seabees established a 300-acre FOB at Deh Dadi as the logistics hub for U.S. forces in the north, capable of housing more than 2,500 personnel.

In total, Seabees completed more than 625 projects in some 65 austere locations in Afghanistan last year. These projects and movements will help NATO coalition forces and the Afghan government take control and maintain rule of law in the country.

**Deemed the largest
earth-moving operation
undertaken by a single
battalion since World War II,
Seabees established a
300-acre FOB at Deh Dadi
as the logistics hub for
U.S. forces in the north.**



EO3 Jacob Higgins, NMCB 40, operates a 'dozer to level a project site, Camp Deh Dadi Two, Afghanistan.

Photo by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

Objective Bakersfield: The Battle in Jeluwar

By MCC Leif HerrGesell, NMCB 18 Public Affairs



Arriving in the Helmand province, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 18, a reserve battalion known as the “Mighty Builders,” began constructing a Combat Outpost (COP) in the Argandab River Valley, to be placed alongside a road essential for U.S. and coalition forces control. Dominating the road and approaches would limit Taliban access to a Forward Operating Base (FOB), three other COPs and the district city of Jeluwar.

The first phase of the offensive by U.S. Army and Afghan forces was to drive out the insurgents, and seize the road and surrounding countryside. Army forces met with fierce fighting, encountering small arms fire, vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) and anti-personnel mines.

Tactical planners immediately established a permanent outpost to support ongoing patrols and provide long-term jurisdiction over the byway. A team of four Seabees from NMCB 18 began building up the initial 50 m-by-100 m COP compound, allowing Army troops from the 320th and Afghan National Army (ANA) to hold the ground. The new compound had to be capable of sustaining the 40-plus personnel of the coalition force.

When they reached the embattled coalition forces, the Seabees found them dug in, occupying hasty fighting positions. Unable to fill their HESCO barriers, Army forces had thrown up empty barriers to simply block the enemy’s line of sight. Taliban forces had also mined the roadbed with anti-personnel mines to deny foot patrols ease of movement.

“We dropped gear, rolled in and they [Army] started filling,” said Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW) Tim Lytle. “They told us it [the area] was hot – really, really hot!”

Army leadership warned the ‘Bees not to work on the far side of the road. An abandoned compound had been heavily wired with explosives and the

(Above, from left to right) CMC(SCW) David Umana, EO1 Trevor Stout, EO1 Nick Larson, EO2 John Taylor, EOCN Brian Samaduroff and CM1(SCW) Tim Lytle. These NMCB 18 Seabees were on the first and third phase of operations at COP Stout, Helmand province, Afghanistan. Thirteen Seabees carried out three missions to provide security and basic sanitation for the Soldiers of the 320th Field Artillery.

Photo by UT2 Vuong Ta

[CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE]

(From left to right) EO1 Nicholas Larson, EO1 Trevor Stout and CM1(SCW) Tim Lytle arrive at COP Tynes after completing a four-day mission in the Aghandab Valley. Two additional missions would be necessary before COP Stout was finished and AFA and U.S. forces could live securely.

Photo by EO2 John Taylor



“Our Soldiers are moving out of the worst COP in the Brigade. They are very excited and grateful!”

Maj. Greg Nardi, executive officer, 1/66, after NMCB 18 finished COP Brunkhurst

[CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE]

ground was salted with Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

CM1 Lytle explained that the fire was constant. “They’d hit us and we’d hit them back, and then they’d fall back,” he said.

The Seabees scraped up fill soil for the Army’s 863rd Engineering Battalion, which filled the HESCOs using an old scoop loader. They worked for 36 hours straight, erecting HESCOs on the north, east and south sides of the future COP. Access to the east side was denied by a six-foot mud wall running parallel to the road and broken by an old farm access point.

Equipment Operator 1st Class Trevor Stout and Equipment Operator 1st Class Nick Larson assisted the Army with operating the scoop loaders. Equipment Operator 2nd Class John Taylor worked alongside

Lytle with another ‘dozer. Lytle and EO2 Taylor stockpiled the fill. According to Lytle, mortar and rifle grenade rounds frequently struck within 30 or 40 feet of the up-armored ‘dozers, but they kept working knowing there would be little let-up until the perimeter was secure. Kiowa attack helicopters readily laid down Hellfire missiles and .50-caliber gunfire in support of the patrols and the new COP’s garrison.

The second phase of the fortification project included leveling an Afghan farm compound that allowed enemy fighters a view into the first-phase COP.

Army personnel set security and Equipment Operator 3rd Class Eliude Loucel surveyed the area with the officer in charge. His first push ‘dozed a path in an easterly direction along the south wall of the farm compound. The path allowed Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) safe access in



Purple Heart



The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the U.S. Armed Forces who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action.

President Barack Obama presented the Purple Heart medal to Senior Chief Logistics Specialist Asouma Kamagate, NMCB 18, at Bethesda Naval Medical Center, Feb. 23. LSCS Kamagate was wounded along with two members of NMCB 26 when a rocket struck the galley at the forward operating base in Kandahar, Afghanistan, Jan. 19.

case EO3 Loucel encountered a large explosive device. Roads and compounds that have been demined still often yield unexploded ordnance or mines, despite best efforts.

Loucel ramped soil from a burn-pit against the west end of the compound's wall to safely remove the building without demolishing two stories simultaneously.

"It was most definitely built for war," said Loucel.

Prior to his arrival, two 500-pound bombs had been dropped on the building without any appreciable damage. The Army had estimated three days to demolish the compound; Loucel finished it in four hours, eliminating a Taliban hiding place.

The third construction campaign expanded the COP to the opposite side of the road, bisected by the highway, with gun towers covering both the route and the

surrounding battlespace. When completed, ANA forces would occupy the new compound to the east and U.S. troops would continue to occupy the original, shared west side compound.

NMCB 18 'Bees expanded the COP and installed basic amenities for coalition forces. They cleared the eastern site of garbage and debris, erected HESCO barriers and crew's nest gun towers on the east compound, and built tent pads and latrine facilities on the west compound. In addition, newly built 11-foot walls denied Taliban troops a target to coalition forces.

An Afghan interpreter monitoring local Taliban communications overheard a message ordering insurgents to target the Seabees in an effort to halt construction. However, "Can Do" spirit prevailed, providing security and quality of life improvements for Army troops.

NMCB 3 Builds Patrol Base for British Troops



CM3 Keith Roman (left) and SW3(SCW) Benard Barbuto NMCB 3, Det. Maiwand, remove a .50-caliber machine gun from a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan.

*Photo by
CM3(SCW) Christopher Carson*

By MCC Jesse A. Sherwin, NMCB 3 Public Affairs

Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 3 can now add a British patrol base, Maiwand District, Afghanistan, to their list of accomplishments. "Lashkar Gah Duri Junction Patrol Base" is the proposed name for the 200 m-by-150 m base built approximately halfway between the coalition bases in Kandahar and Camp Leatherneck.

"In the past, this district has been considered no man's land and, therefore, has had a lot of IED (Improvised Explosive Device) hits," said Chief Builder (SCW) Andy Buckingham, NMCB 3 det.'s assistant officer in charge. "Since the base was built, there has already been a drastic decrease in IEDs along this section of Highway 1, just because of our presence."

When the Seabees arrived, they immediately coordinated their security perimeter with the British. Between the detachment's gun trucks and what the British had in place, troops from both nations established and maintained a 360-degree security perimeter.

The next task was mine-proofing the area. This included bulldozing with a mine rake attachment to scan the area for potential mines or explosive hazards.

"Fortunately, we didn't find any [explosives]," said BUC Buckingham.

As base construction began, Seabees placed hundreds of dirt-filled, wire-framed and cloth-encased security barriers – HESCOs – all around and inside the base. The rest of the construction included building a helicopter landing pad, four guard towers, two entry control points, roads and other support structures.

"It was truly the chance of a lifetime. We experienced building a base from the ground up," said Builder 3rd Class (SCW) Steven Szyplinski. "When we arrived in the area there was nothing but a gas station, bus stop and desert."



NMCB 3 Seabees, Det. Maiwand, and British civil engineers build a guard tower, called a "sangan," at the corner of a new base, Maiwand District, Helmand province, Afghanistan.
Photo by HMC(FMF) Joseph Haner

Equipment Operator 1st Class
Jason Cocke, a 35-year-old reservist from Spokane, Wash., and a married father of four, kept a journal during his recent deployment on active duty to Afghanistan with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 18. EO1 Cocke and his fellow Seabees arrived at Kandahar Air Field (KAF) in Afghanistan and immediately began deploying "outside the wire" to a variety of Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and construction sites. The following are excerpts from his journal.

Notes and transcription by
MCC Leif R. HerrGesell, NMCB 18

Aug. 3, 2010

Up at 3:45 a.m. – couldn't sleep. I felt something was going to happen today... ate breakfast with our disbanded CSE (Combat Security Element) team. The rocket siren blared and we dove to the ground... We were in full battle rattle (body armor and Kevlar helmet) with weapons ready. We had a complex attack at one of our ECPs (entry control points). Small arms and suicide bombers. One of our guys received shrapnel wounds. I think reality has set in for many of us. This is going to be a busy deployment. A lot of the guys are looking to me for strength.

Aug. 20, 2010

It took four hours to travel here, 35 miles from KAF. Three Jingle trucks (slang name for heavily decorated, privately owned Afghan freight trucks) in our convoy broke down in Kandahar City... We are amidst Ramadan; streets of KC are full of kids and men. No women in sight... A group of boys all waved and saluted us. Weird to see that because I'd been told they all throw rocks at us.

Sept. 16, 2010

We pushed past the first *wadi* (dry creek bed that carries runoff water in rainy times). Got my chance on the dozer around 1:30 p.m. We came under fire... small arms, mortars and 82 mm recoilless rifle (small canon). EO1 Kreamalayer asked if I could go back and take out two more trees... We immediately came under heavy fire again, about 100 m away... I yelled at Kream to get in the dozer with me. We moved back 200 m to the first wadi and pulled out a dozer that had been stuck all day. At the same time the A-10s (Thunderbolt Jet), 155 mm howitzers, Apaches (attack helicopters) and the Lynx (British-made attack helicopter) started a heavy air assault (and artillery barrage). What a sight to see so much air support so close...

more...

Seabees Play Critical Role in War on Terror in Afghanistan

Seabees today praise the legendary Seabees of WWII. The Seabees of tomorrow will praise Sailors like those in Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 40 and the world-changing history they are making in Afghanistan.

“The war in Afghanistan needs Seabees,” said U.S. Army Gen. Lester Simpson, Commander, Task Force Hammer. “Seabees have empowered the warfighter by improving and enhancing force protection measures on the bases, allowing our Task Force construction efforts off the Forward Operating Base (FOB) in support of battlespace owners during the clear, build and hold phase of operations.”

“NMCB 40 is truly an asset to our nation. I personally had a hand in keeping them in this country to continue to provide engineering support to carry out our mission. They are professionals; I know the Seabees will complete this project on time and under budget.”

U.S. Army Gen. David Petraeus, commanding officer, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), during a visit to one of NMCB 40's detail sites in Sheberghan, Afghanistan

NMCB 40 is also a part of Task Force Keystone, the largest engineering force in theater led by the Third Naval Construction Regiment (3NCR).

From the surge of more than 30,000 troops ordered by President Barack Obama in December 2009, more than 1,200 have been Seabees from multiple active and reserve component battalions.

“We are out in front blazing a path, cutting routes and roads well into enemy territory,” said Senior Chief Equipment Operator Shane Potts, NMCB 40. “These are not routes that have already been taken and held. We’re taking the new ground and holding it.”

EOCS Potts and his 12-man team, comprised of members from both NMCB 40's Air Detachment and NMCB 18, worked in the Horn of Panjwahi located in Kandahar province, bulldozing a new path known as Route Hyena.

The 60 m wide, 24 km route will open lines and improve communications between coalition forces to help prevent Taliban attacks. Since the start of the project, Potts's team has worked side by side with Canadian M-1 Abrams tank team, knocking down compounds occupied by Taliban fighters and encountering Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), small-arms fire and even rocket-propelled grenade attacks.

Slightly to the west of Kandahar in Sangsar – the birthplace of the Taliban – a combat outpost (COP) building



team from NMCBs 40 and 18 also met resistance.

“We felt the ground shake and the shockwave from the blast went through us,” said Builder 1st Class Steven Maldonado, NMCB 40. “Within a minute, I was told that our project site had been hit by a Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device [VBIED].”

After a secondary attack from small arms fire, Chief Hospital Corpsman Jeffrey Coslett said, “The Army and ANA responded with suppressive fire and rocket-propelled grenades. They even called in an air strike. We just stayed focused on treating the patients. We all came together and really worked as a team.”

HMC Maldonado said as soon as personal belongings and sensitive items were recovered, rubble from the collapsed building was used to fill the large HESCO barrier perimeter around the new COP.

Simultaneously, another three-week COP project was taking place in Khevajeh Molk, where NMCBs 40, 26 and 18 worked together to fortify an Army patrol base. The coalition stronghold will help ensure peace and stability in a portion

By MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins, NMCB 40 Public Affairs



of the Arghandab River Valley, an area that has seen decades of fighting and criminal activity.

"The Seabees have been a huge enabler for us," said Army Staff Sgt. Robert Carter, 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment. "They have allowed us to maintain a permanent presence here. The locals want protection from the Taliban and it's hard to make promises protecting them when you constantly have to leave for re-supply."

Staff Sgt. Carter said that he and other Soldiers from the 1/66th had been operating out of a small patrol base in a vacant village school. With the return of fall classes, the patrol base was relocated to a pre-existing compound on the eastern edges of the village.

The fortification portion of the project was initially going to be completed by a civilian contractor, Carter said. However, the contractor estimated a total of three months to fill the HESCO barriers.

"The Seabees did it in three weeks," Carter said. "This allowed us to get back to our jobs instead of focusing on securing a perimeter."

(Above) A Pre-Deployment Site Survey (PDSS) team conducts reconnaissance near an ISAF FOB, Northern Afghanistan. Team members include (from left) Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Javier Vega, Lt. j.g. Chris Widhalm, NMCB 40, and Army 1st Lt. Paul Lataille.
Photo by
MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 17]

Sept. 18, 2010

At Makuan – I believe I have a Guardian Angel...I ran over a land mine today and it didn't blow up, it only smoldered. I don't know if it was anti-personnel or anti-tank. I was working the first *wadi* at Rte. Michelle...Artillery shells began to pound the area just past the 2nd *wadi*. It rattled my dozer (and me). I stopped—couldn't see because all the dust in the cab was now floating about. The dozer blade was now atop the tree I was pushing. I began to reverse the dozer, looked back and saw three distinct small plumes of smoke coming out of the ground. I didn't think anything of it, turned back forward and pushed the tree to the pile I'd made. I backed to the same area and saw smoke still smoldering from the small hole in the ground...

Oct. 25, 2010

Day 2 into breach mission. We've only moved about 2 clicks (kilometers). This route is heavily laden w/IEDs and mines. We hit one yesterday around 10 a.m...EOD was called back...While waiting we saw an explosion at the compound about 60 m ahead...Army patrol hit a booby trap (anti-personnel mine)...medevac called in w/injured soldiers. Then they called in the KIA, found on the roof of the compound. We moved only another 100 m past that for the rest of day...had to wait for ANA (Afghan National Army) to clear any local nationals. ANA and Army finally arrived and began clearing. . .another explosion – U.S. casualty...Their medic called in another KIA, this time – one of the bomb-detecting dogs.

Oct. 28, 2010

Today we finish pushing back to "Terminator" (COP). Our convoy hit 2 IEDs yesterday. A striker (gun truck) and an MRAP were disabled completely, no one killed. Last night we set up camp at the location of the MRAP that was hit so we could recover it in the morning.

Two Taliban were seen yesterday planting an IED on our route back (Iron City). The predator (drone aircraft) spotted them and engaged. They were both killed. We will be demolishing two or three compounds today in the area of the IED hit. Our first day out on this mission – that was where the mine dog was KIA.

Nov. 8, 2010

...Should be headed back to KAF in a few days...looking forward to getting back for some rest.

Note: EO1 Cocke and his team were in the field for close to 60 days providing construction support, bulldozing roadways and building COPs for tactical troops.



“You Seabees
are winning
the war!”

Maj. John White, operations
officer, 2/502, on NMCBs 18
and 40 constructing a key
strongpoint



[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15]

COP-building is big business for today's Seabees and another essential element needed in winning the war on terror in Afghanistan.

"Putting these strong-points in place minimizes the freedom of movement for the Taliban," said Lt. j.g. David Sare, NMCB 40. "We're taking advantage of the winter lull in the fighting season to build these COPs so when the fighters come back in the spring, we will have more control of the land."

"This is the first time I have ever seen a FOB being built from the ground up totally by Seabees," said Ensign Grant Glover, NMCB 40's embarkation officer. "We have done many

"We must use this window of opportunity to hold and maintain strategic populations...This is a fight for people, not terrain. A strong enduring presence will show the local populace we are here to stay."

Marine Master Sgt. John Kroll

small-scale COP missions that support 100 to 200 Soldiers. We built this base to support nearly 3,000 or more as the surge continues. This kind of work is a Seabee's dream."

"Every day Seabees are expanding the reputation of the naval construction forces," said Task Force Keystone Commodore Donald Hedrick. "Our engineers continue to impress the battlespace commanders and our NATO counterparts. As we integrate into their operations, they are grateful for our efforts and of course they want their own Seabees."

According to Commodore Hedrick, Seabees have never before seen this level of intensity or been this involved. "In the words of [Rear] Admiral Mark Handley," he said, "There's never been a better time to be a Seabee."



For outstanding contribution to the spring 2011 issue, *Seabee Magazine* congratulates MCC (NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins for his coverage of NMCB 40's role in creating history in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. MCC Watkins penned our cover feature article and captured impactful imagery – too many photos for the pages of our magazine. Visit the Seabee Nation on Facebook – www.facebook.com/SeabeeMagazine – to see more. Can Do!

(Left) NMCB 40 'Bees and local Afghan contractors place concrete for helicopter landing pads at FOB Khilaguy, Afghanistan.
Photo by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

U.S., Canadian Forces Build Horn of Panjwaii Road

Seabees and Army Engineers from Task Force Keystone, led by the Third Naval Construction Regiment (3NCR), in Kandahar, Afghanistan, worked in conjunction with the 2nd Royal Canadian Regiment (2RCR) out of Quebec, Canada, to construct Route Hyena. The improved route provides a ground line of communication, benefiting both civilian and military operations in the Horn of Panjwaii.



Seabees from NMCBs 18 and 40 use 'dozers to clear a new section of Route Hyena, Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Photo by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

By MCC(SW) Terrina Weatherspoon,
Public Affairs Officer, 3NCR

The Horn of Panjwaii is a populated strip of land that sits between the Arghandab and Dowrey rivers. The terrain is irrigated and serves as an agricultural hub for the Kandahar province.

Improving the route allows better access into the area, especially when the Arghandab River floods during the winter rainy season, cutting off fording sites into the Zhari District. The roadway connects local farmers to markets in Kandahar City and beyond. The new road also better connects the local populace to the Panjwaii District Center, also located along Route Hyena. This connection demonstrates to the Panjwaii populace a strong Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) presence in the area, in addition to the fact that control is no longer in the hands of Taliban.

The route also provides critical resupply to new combat outposts (COPs) constructed by Army and Navy Task Force Keystone battalions in the Horn of Panjwaii, supporting coalition efforts to clear and hold the area.

Although the route is a Canadian-led project and the Canadians have an engineering effort in Afghanistan, they have neither the assets nor the equipment needed for this type of job.

"Fortunately, the Americans know what we want, and they are experienced [and] very professional," said Sgt. Patrick Auger, 2RCR Battlegroup. "At this point we are just providing security and making it as safe as possible for them to operate."

Canadian "sappers" [combat engineers] cleared Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to set the stage for follow-on construction efforts. The job is truly a team effort. Canadians lead the way by using a Badger (an armored engineering vehicle that provides support to mechanized combat forces) to drive down the center line of the route. Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) 18 and 40 came up behind the Badgers with bulldozers, making a 21 m wide road with 30 m fields of fire. From there, the 864th Engineering Battalion, also part of Task Force Keystone, finished up by laying gravel over the road.

The local environment posed engineering challenges to constructing the new road, especially where the route deviated from the existing center line to avoid villages and mosques. The high water table created an unstable platform for both the road and construction equipment. U.S. and Canadian engineers solved this problem through the use of two soil stabilization techniques, geo textile fabric and mixing in Portland concrete cement.

"Working with the Canadians has been a great opportunity for both our Army and Navy engineers," said Lt. Cmdr. David Platz, 3NCR. "We have been at the ground level of their planning efforts, ensuring that our engineering concerns are heard and integrated into their overall battle plan."

**Warning signs
of suicide are
not always this
obvious...**

ACT.

ASK - CARE - TREAT

ASK if someone is thinking about suicide.

Let them know you **CARE**.

Get them assistance (**TREATment**) as soon as possible.

Life counts.

www.suicide.navy.mil



Cobra Gold 2011:

Building to Learn, Learning to Build

By MC1(AW) Jonathan Carmichael, NMCB 11



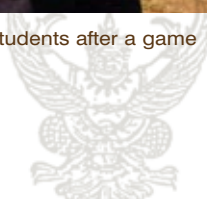
BU3(SCW) Daniel Meier, NMCB 11, laughs and plays with Pa Ka Mai students after a game of soccer, Mae Sot, Thailand, during Cobra Gold 2011.

Photos by Lt. j.g. Kevin Burnett

“Who else can say they went to Thailand and built a school?” asks Construction Electrician 2nd Class (SCW) Jacob Brickley, one of 37 Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 participating in Cobra Gold 2011 (CG 11).

Cobra Gold is an annual joint and multinational exercise co-sponsored by Thailand and the United States. With 30 years of history, Cobra Gold is now one of the largest land-based joint, combined military training exercises in the world, with approximately 11,220 participants – 7,200 from the U.S. military. Participating nations include Thailand, Singapore, Japan, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia and the United States.

Rooted in partnerships, Cobra Gold recognizes the need for multinational solutions to common challenges. As part of the Humanitarian Civic Assistance phase of CG 11, NMCB 11 worked with the Royal Thai Military Mobile Development Unit (MDU) to build two schools in extremely remote areas of Mae Sot, Thailand, near the Burmese bor-





der. These school buildings replaced inadequate facilities for more than 800 children who attend classes at the Ruam Thai Charoen Kindergarten and Pa Ka Mai Schools. Each new school building is 8 m by 20 m, and is constructed of stuccoed concrete, concrete blocks and steel truss roof, with a full electrical system.

Capitalizing on the key tenets of the maritime strategy, Cobra Gold expands cooperative relationships between the U.S. military and international partners.

“Working with the U.S. military has presented me with new knowledge and modern techniques in construction,” said Electrical Corporal Jirajus Rachadee, MDU 33. “Even though this is only training, the project is very beneficial to the Thai people.”

While completing the mission, CG 11 participants overcame several challenges. “The language barrier was tough,” said Lt. j.g. Kevin Burnett, det. officer in charge, NMCB 11. Due to the extreme remoteness of the construction locations, trucks

delivering supplies and materials had a difficult time getting to the crews. The nearest city was an hour drive away, and phone and internet communications were extremely limited.

“We had to wait more than a week for our concrete columns to arrive,” said Lt. j.g. Burnett. “However, the Seabees and MDU put out an amazing effort to get both projects back on schedule.”

In addition to overcoming challenges, participants dealt with various inconveniences throughout the exercise. A scarce supply of hot water translated to mostly cold showers – taken in converted portable toilets. Berthing in close proximity to pigs, chickens and hens ensured that the crews only slept a few hours each night.

“Coming here has made me appreciate the small things we take for granted in the U.S.,” said Construction Electrician Constructionman Brandon Williams, NMCB 11, “and it has given me the satisfaction of using my skills to improve the future generations of Thailand.”

NMCB 11 Seabees and the Royal Thai Mobile Development Unit place grade beam reinforcement, Mae Sot, Thailand.



“Coming here has made me appreciate the small things we take for granted in the U.S.”

~ CECN Brandon Williams,
NMCB 11

Seabees, Marines Repair Schools in Guatemala

By MC1 Jeffery Tilghman Williams, *High Speed Vessel Swift* (HSV 2) Public Affairs



BU2 Joshua Helton (left) and CE2 Michael Hollingsworth, NMCB 28, weld a support beam for a roof at Escuela Campamento LaBarrita, Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala.
Photo by MC1 Jeffery Tilghman Williams

Seabees assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 28's Detail Bravo and Marines with the 2nd Marine Logistics Group completed school repairs and participated in a special ceremony, alongside Guatemalan sailors and soldiers, as part of Southern Partnership Station 2011. This annual event deploys U.S. military ships to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility in the Caribbean and Latin America. The mission's primary goal is information-sharing with navies, coast guards and civilian services throughout the region.

As NMCB 28 'Bees worked with their Guatemalan counterparts as part of a two-week exchange, the joint team repaired weather-damaged roofs, constructed desks, welded security bars, reinforced damaged trusses, installed electrical wiring and repaired plumbing at Escuela Santa Marta and Escuela Campamento LaBarrita. Repairs were needed after Tropical Storm Agatha brought widespread flooding to much of Central America.

"The damage caused by [Tropical Storm] Agatha left these schools in pretty bad shape," said Chief Builder Estephan Garcia, "but fortunately we were able to...make some improvements for

the teachers and students."

In addition, the joint forces team completed a Southeast Asia (SEA) hut to be used for additional classroom space at Escuela Justo Rufino Morales Mackarty.

Although the primary focus of the renovations was to build bonds between the U.S. and Guatemalan governments through military information exchanges and partnership efforts, there was also an opportunity for impromptu repairs.

"Once we realized we were ahead of schedule and had extra material, we decided to make additional roof installments, weld security gates and even design a tool that allows the kids to transport drinking water to the classroom more efficiently," said BUC Garcia.

The ceremony, held at one of the newly repaired schools, included local cuisine, traditional dance and a certificate presentation to the U.S. Sailors and Marines.

"This is just a small token of our appreciation," said Sulma Siomara Sanchez Recinos, principal, Escuela Campamento LaBarrita. "This far surpasses what we expected them to assist us with, and we are very grateful."



CWO2 Eric Yobs (center), NMCB 11, discusses the merits of a solar-powered water pumping system, Kiritimati (Christmas) Island, Kiribati.

Photo by Ensign Joe Painter

NMCB 11 Builds First Healthcare Facility on Christmas Island

By Ensign Joe Painter,
Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

Kiritimati (Christmas) Island citizens and U.S. service members recently celebrated the opening of a new facility to improve healthcare for pregnant women and babies.

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11 Seabees built a 1,900-square-foot maternity ward for the island's lone medical facility. The ward will serve the entire Line Islands archipelago population of roughly 9,000, which previously had only a tiny room dedicated to newborn and infant care.

"Our prayers have been answered," said the Honorable Dr. Kautu Tenaua, Republic of Kiribati's minister for health and medical services. "I have no doubt that the delivery and healthcare for our [people] will improve."

At the invitation of the Kiribati government, the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) sent NMCB 11 Seabees to Christmas Island. The mission for the mostly junior enlisted team involved conducting humanitarian and civic assistance through engineering and civil construction projects identified by the host nation. These projects – including a solar-powered water pumping system – provided training to hone construction skills for the Seabees, as well as helped nurture the friendship between the United States and Kiribati.

"It builds our friendship capacity and provides the training we need in different environments," said Air Force Brig. Gen. Stanley J. Osserman Jr., mobilization assistant to the director of Strategy and Policy, PACOM.

Brig. Gen. Osserman said the opportunity to utilize Seabees is a win-win opportunity for the United States and Kiribati.

"Part of what we have done here, thanks to the Seabees, is to help [the] community build friendships and relationships that are important for our whole region to remain peaceful and stable," said Osserman.

In addition to the healthcare facility, NMCB 11 constructed various structures for the island's school system, including a new five-classroom building at the Banana Primary School.

"The locals have been very receptive about the work we have done," said Chief Steelworker Mike Blackney, NMCB 11. "While we were working on classrooms for one of the schools, students even brought us coconuts to drink from throughout the day."

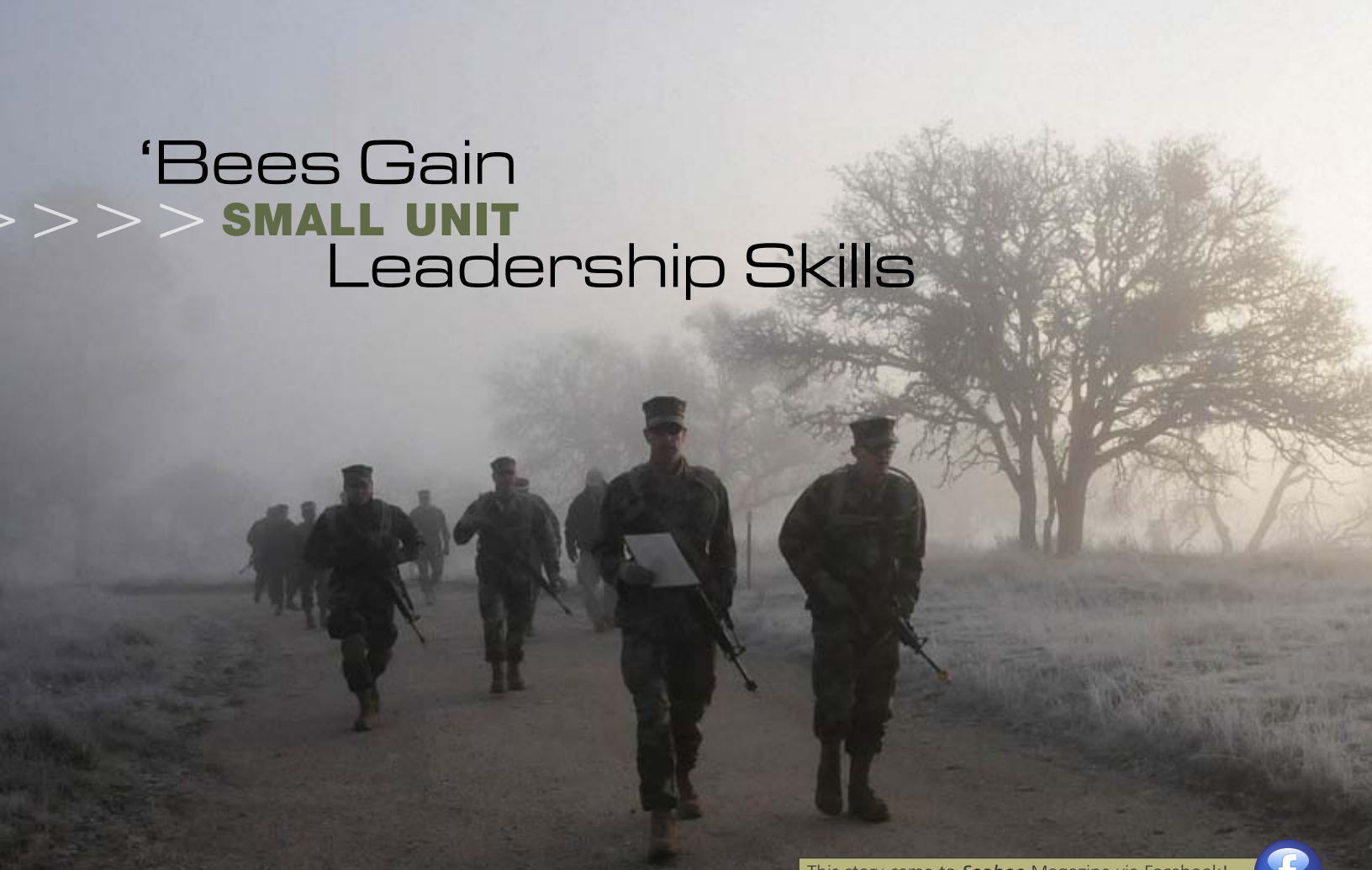
Kiritimati - or Christmas - Island is a Pacific Ocean atoll and part of the Republic of Kiribati.

COORDINATES 01°52' N 157°24' W

'Bees Gain

SMALL UNIT

Leadership Skills



This story came to *Seabee* Magazine via Facebook!



Story and Photos by MC2(SCW) Ace Rheume, NMCB 5

Seabees attached to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 5 participated in a two-week squad leaders field training exercise (FTX), at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., focusing on small unit leadership and combat skills.

Small unit leadership is one of the most important tools within a battalion. Without trained and tested squad leaders, the battalion may not function with maximum efficiency. This is especially true since the role of deployed Seabees is changing. While deployed to a contingency environment, 'Bees may have to build bases from the ground up while conducting security patrols and convoys.

"The curriculum is updated to today's war," said Construction Mechanic 1st Class (SCW/EXW/SW) Simon Fresquez. "['Bees] can take this knowledge with them on their next deployment."

During the FTX, NMCB 5 squad leaders learned navigation and patrol skills, and other essential Seabee Combat Warfare (SCW) knowledge – spending one week in a classroom and one week in the field.

NMCB 5 squad leaders in full battle gear patrolled on rugged terrain and braved cold weather during the FTX; they also demonstrated their knowledge of land navigation and medical evacuation (medevac), as well as how to establish a base.

The class split into different squads, with two to three instructors teaching and advising each group on techniques for success. Teamwork was required to accomplish each mission.

"The instructors are knowledgeable," said Utilitiesman 1st Class (SCW) Kevin Swanson, NMCB 5 air det. "They keep you motivated, and are there with you from beginning to end."

Small unit leadership and tactical skills gained during the FTX were immediately put to use, as squad leaders returned to the battalion and participated in the 2nd Annual NMCB 5 Vietnam Six Memorial Super-Squad Competition.

Over an 11-week period, squads compete at the platoon and company level in various tactical, administrative and military professional events, with the goal of achieving super-squad status.

(Above) NMCB 5 Seabees travel to the starting point of a land navigation training course, Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

(Right) SW1 Keith Lockwood, NMCB 5, marks locations for patrol checkpoints at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.



An Ongoing Mission Balancing Work and Life

By FORCM(SCW) Mike Holdcraft, USN

Sailors. They are the Navy's best and most valuable resource, and one of the most complicated.

As leaders we need to not only concern ourselves with our Sailor's life in uniform, but out of it as well. That is to say, at work and at home. After all, how Sailors – how our Seabees – live their lives away from the Hive is a major factor in success and/or failure.

Maintaining the proper work/life balance for Seabees revolves around understanding what a Seabee wants, what he needs and how he balances getting both.

As leaders we can help every step of the way. The first step is to help our Seabee organize his priorities. Having balance means knowing what weighs on him, and what he wants the most weighs the heaviest. The problems exist when Seabees don't structure their lives around achieving what is most important to them.

GUIDELINES TO ATTAIN WORK/LIFE BALANCE

- **PRIORITIZE** Eliminate activities or efforts that have no value. How much time do you waste on e-mails, surfing the Internet or chatting on your cell phone when other tasks – tasks that help you meet your prioritized goals – are left uncompleted?
- **DELEGATE** While everyone wants to do his best, sometimes you need to delegate the less-challenging tasks to free up time and ability for what you want and need to do.
- **EXERCISE** Battalion life usually takes care of this one, but PT is and always has been one of the very best ways to release stress, build physical fitness and think complicated problems through.
- **RELAX** After a long, successful day even the most hardened warriors need to regroup, recharge and, most of all, relax. Make the time.

The solution is, talk to your Seabees. Ask them what matters. Then, listen to them tell you about how everything else in their life either contributes to or takes away from what matters.

Seabees, build downtime in your day. Make it a point to schedule time with family and friends, participating in activities that help you recharge.

Defining priorities allows Seabees to see who they are to everyone else and reminds them of who they want to be.

Once the Seabee understands what his life is all about, or what he wants it to be about, developing the disciplines to make it that way becomes simpler. Remind him that many times the major things he wants to accomplish will mandate the majority of his time. Often called the 80/20 rule, the assumption is that most of the results in any situation are determined by a small number of causes.

That means your Seabee needs to be ready to manage the rest of his time, that other 20 percent, exceptionally well. In fact, it is this other 20 percent that accounts for 80 percent of your Seabee's challenges, because that other 20 percent often goes unnoticed, or worse – neglected.

Whatever your Seabee's 20 percent is matters because it balances his life. Remind him early of this, and remind him often. No matter what his main focus in life may be, if he fails to balance it with his other needs, with his supporting cast's needs, his focus won't be sharpened.

Leaders, look for the signs of a Seabee who may be out of work/life balance. Look for distractions. Look for inconsistent performance and trends. Talk to your Seabees.

And one last thing – follow your own advice.

Leaders, our
mission is
pretty simple:
Sailors first.
Mission always.

(Background photo) Seabees assigned to NMCB 40 begin their journey back to homeport in Port Hueneme, Calif., from Deh Dadi Two, Afghanistan. Before departure, NMCB 40 turned the camp over to U.S. and NATO forces as a major hub in the northern Afghanistan distribution network supply route.

Photo by MCC(NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins

Advancement Trending Lower Than Average

By NC1(SCW) Robert A. Wetzel,
NAVFAC Headquarters

Photo by MC2 Ja'lon A. Rhinehart

Many of you have been wondering why advancement this past cycle has been significantly lower than average, and whether this is a one-time deal or a trend for the future. The reality is that for future cycles, it will continue to be tough to advance.

There are several factors affecting advancement. First, there are no vacancies to advance personnel. Second, retention is high and is not giving way to promote to the next pay grade. The billet reductions for fiscal year 2012 caused authorized Seabee manning levels to go down, so there are fewer spots for advancement. Perform to Serve (PTS) is also affecting advancement. With the new system in place combining Fleet Ride and PTS, the ability for the Navy to keep the best personnel will alleviate the pressure of the Navy not being able to advance their personnel.

Several options should be considered to determine what career path you will take from here. You could "weather the storm." Ride out the low quotas and continue taking the advancement tests. Study hard, get good evaluations, earn a degree and maybe even an award to help your chances. Re-take your Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery Test (ASVAB). Conversion to undermanned ratings is also a good idea. Not only

does it help the Navy, but it will increase your chances for advancement.

"As we continue to stabilize the force, advancements will continue to be very competitive," said Senior Chief Engineering Aide (SCW) Siegfried L. Pitpitan, manager, Seabee Enlisted Community. "If there is the opportunity to advance, strive hard to be the one."

You could affiliate with the Reserves which have undermanned ratings and will even award cash bonuses for signing up. The Blue to Green Program is still an option as well. For those who qualify, you can look into similar rates/MOS, do something completely different or even be a warrant officer. And for those who have 20 years or more of service, retirement may be an option.

Do your research. Speak with your chain and counselors to help with your decision. Commands may even speak with their personnel about options on the Career Development Boards (CDBs). Although up to the command, the Command Advancement Program (CAP) is always available to Type II and recruiting commands.

Advancement will continue to be tough Navy-wide. All rates and ranks will feel the pinch. However, for those who make good career choices and tough it out, advancement will be available sometime in the future.

Seabee Museum is on the Move

By Lara Godbille, Director, U.S. Navy Seabee Museum,
Naval History and Heritage Command

The U.S. Navy Seabee Museum is on its way to a new location. Thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC)/Seabee Historical Foundation, the museum is relocating to a new \$12 million state-of-the-art facility in Port Hueneme, Calif. The 'Bee museum is slated to open by fall 2011.

Many have asked why it will take so long for the museum to move. This is a valid question, especially coming from a community that prides itself on the motto: "The difficult we do at once, the impossible takes a little longer." The truth is there are many critical logistics issues in professionally moving a collection of the size and scope of the Seabee Museum – a large collection, encompassing nearly 11,000 artifacts, ranging in size from ribbon bars to bulldozers, and 8,500 linear feet of archival materials including Seabee operational records, photographs, maps and films.

While the majority of the Seabee Museum staff's energy has been focused on the move, momentum on installing the exhibits in the new facility has not been lost. When not lending a hand to the collection staff, Museum Exhibit Curator William Shaner has identified stories and artifacts for the new building. The modern construction of the new facility allows the Seabee and CEC story to be told through fresh and interactive exhibits. In addition, these contemporary story-telling techniques will allow a greater part of the museum's collection – most notably the historical film footage – to be on display.

Although the official (re)opening of the museum is not scheduled until fall, the new facility is open the first and third Tuesday and the first Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. These open house opportunities provide visitors a "sneak peek" of the new museum. The public is welcome; reservations are not required.

For up-to-date information about the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, please visit our website at www.usnavyseabee-museum.com or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/seabeesmuseum.



The updated museum logo is prominently displayed on the side of the new U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Port Hueneme, Calif. The shape of the logo pays homage to the Quonset hut and the seven stripes (includes the spaces in between) represent the seven Seabee ratings.

Photo courtesy of the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval History and Heritage Command

Seabees, NAVFAC Win CHINFO Awards

By NAVFAC HQ Public Affairs
and Communications



The Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), as well as Seabees and Sailors, recently won several awards as part of the U.S. Navy's 2010 Chief of Information (CHINFO) Merit Awards Competition. NAVFAC's *Seabee* Magazine won first place in the magazine format publication category.

MCC (SW) Terrina Weatherspoon, a reservist assigned to 3NCR and a frequent *Seabee* Magazine contributor, won first place in the feature article category for her story, "Three Times a Sailor, Twice a Chief" (first published in the winter 2010 issue of *Seabee*). She also won first place in the commentary category for "Afghanistan One Photo at a Time." MCC Weatherspoon was further honored with second place for the Navy Print Journalist of the Year.

Outstanding contributions by battalions were also recognized. Another frequent *Seabee* Magazine contributor, MCC (NAC/EXW) Michael B. Watkins, NMCB 40, won first place for his story, "Seabee Battalions Fortify Positions, Foster Relationships in Afghanistan." Read more of his work in this issue.

EA2 David Laster, CBMU 202 Det. Key West, won second place in the stringer photojournalism category for "Practice Makes a Perfect Seabee."

In the Familygram category, 22NCR won second place for "Seabees in the Sand." For Cruisebooks, NMCB 3 took top prize, and NMCB 74 was awarded second place.

Can Do!

MAY

26 - 28 MAY
56th NCB (WWII)
Covington, LA
William Rosevally
4 Karen Dr.
Covington, LA 70433
985-867-8198 (h)
504-231-7474 (cell)
billrosevally@aol.com

JUNE

23 - 26 JUNE
ALL SEABEE REUNION
Port Hueneme, CA
Ed Kloster
3815 Rio Hondo Ave.
Rosemead, CA 91770
626-280-9495
allseabees@charter.net

24 - 25 JUNE

33rd ANNUAL MUSE
REUNION/PIG ROAST
Port Hueneme, CA (NCTC Park)
UCCM Matt Smith
NFELC, Code PW3
1000 23rd Ave.
Port Hueneme, CA 93043
805-982-5323/805-982-1593
john.m.smith2@navy.mil

JULY

JULY 4th WEEKEND
NMCB 1 / NMCB 9 (Mini Reunion)
Hemlock, NY
Peter Dowd
89 Edwards Rd.
Marshfield, MA 02050
781-837-0393
mcb1reunion@verizon.net

For a complete list of reunions, visit www.allseabees.com or the Seabee Historical Foundation at www.seabeehf.org.

To all Seabees, Civil Engineer Corps officers and
Naval Facilities Engineering Command civilians –

Happy Birthday!

In March, we celebrated three anniversaries: the 69th of the Seabees, the 144th of the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) and the 169th of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC).

We stand on a strong foundation built by leaders such as William P.S. Sanger and Admiral Ben Moreell, and we are inspired by the example of heroes such as Construction Mechanic 3rd Class Marvin Shields and Steelworker 2nd Class Robert Stethem. Wherever you are stationed around the globe, you are building on the proud heritage of the “Can Do” Seabee, CEC and NAVFAC team.

Your contribution to our nation’s security is as vital as ever. Around the world today, NAVFAC is building and maintaining the shore platforms that allow naval forces to deploy forward into harm’s way. Operating from jungles in the Pacific to the mountains of Afghanistan, Seabees are making essential contributions to winning the current fight and preventing the next. CEC officers are leading this powerful team, enabling critical support to the joint warfighter and our nation. Military and civilian, officer and enlisted, active and reserve: Each of you is providing a critical contribution to the Navy’s impact as a Global Force for Good.

As we celebrate each other’s company, our rich traditions, and our cherished legacy of accomplishment and service, we pay special honor to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and who have been wounded in the service of our country. As our Commander in Chief has said, these heroes represent the best of America.

To all Seabees, CEC officers and NAVFAC civilians, I thank you and your families for your service and commitment to the defense of our nation. Through your daily professional efforts and personal sacrifices, you make our Navy stronger and our nation safer.

Happy Birthday!
Rear Adm. C.J. Mossey



Rear Adm. C.J. Mossey (left), commander and chief of civil engineers, NAVFAC, visits with elements of NMCBs 18, 26 and 40, Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Photo by UT2 Vuong Ta

Diversity Strengthens Seabee Force

BY Rear Adm. Paula Brown, CEC, USN

Last year was an especially eventful year for women in the Seabees and Civil Engineer Corps (CEC). Rear Adm. Kate Gregory was promoted as the CEC's first female flag officer. This past fall, I was honored to join her as the second female CEC rear admiral and the first female deputy commander, First Naval Construction Division.

Although women have consistently made forward strides, the integration of women into the Seabees did not happen overnight, and there were many female pioneers who helped pave the way for me and others. Much of this started in 1901 when the Army Nurse Corps was established allowing women to officially serve in the military.

Things began to really change for females in the military in the 1970s. In 1972, the Navy initiated a pilot program to assign women to ships onboard the USS *Sanctuary*, an auxiliary ship. Women were finally accepted into the military academies starting in the summer of 1976. Then in 1978, Congress approved a change to Title 10 USC to permit the Navy to assign women to fill sea duty billets on support and non-combatant ships. Although women were limited to non-combat support roles, they often found themselves in harm's way, since almost any type of military unit is subject to combat attack, even those well behind the front lines.

Prior to the 1990s, women were not allowed to serve in Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCBs) since they were classified as combat units, and Federal law prohibited women in combat units. In 1991 during the Persian Gulf War, Congress modified the combat ban slightly to permit women to be assigned to combat aircraft. Two years later Congress further modified the combat exclusion law to allow women to be assigned to surface combat ships and NMCBs. In fiscal year 1994 the National Defense Authorization Act directed the Navy to delineate plans for integrating women into these units.

The first woman ordered to an NMCB was BUC Cheryl Hundley, reporting to NMCB 5 in April 1994. Later that month Lt. j.g. Michaela Bradley became the first female CEC officer assigned to an NMCB when she reported to NMCB 133. By June 1994, more than 100 enlisted women and 14 female officers were under orders to NMCBs. By October of that same year, all eight active and 12 reserve NMCBs had women on board; a few even had female executive officers.

As Rear Adm. Gregory commented, "The CEC community leadership was aggressive in getting the units opened as policies changed. The forward-looking, professional, common-sense, 'Can Do' approach by everyone – CEC officers, chiefs community and Seabees at large – made integration fairly easy."

Before the change in assignment policy, most female Seabees were confined to shore billets. Several years earlier, however, women were already being assigned to Amphibious Construction Battalions (ACBs) and Construction Battalion Units (CBUs) since they were not considered combat units.

Back in 1986, Lt. Kate Gregory and Lt. Linda Sellers were the first females in ACBs.

Female Seabees were also assigned to CBUs 411 and 415 when they landed in Saudi Arabia in August 1990, to build and maintain a fleet hospital. In fact, both CBUs had female CEC officers in charge, marking the first time that women CEC officers led troops in a combat zone. One of the few females killed in Iraq was a Seabee, Petty Officer 1st Class Regina Clark, a culinary specialist serving with 30NCR. She had volunteered to help foster dignity for the Iraqi women, and died in June 2005 when the vehicle in which she and a group of Marines were traveling hit an IED.

Today, more than 1,800 females are serving with the Seabees in nearly all ranks and rates all over the world. The integration of women in our force is just one story of how diversity has made us stronger. Like the integration of other minorities into the military in previous generations, the process is often gradual and paved with the sacrifices of those first individuals leading the way. But ultimately, a Navy that is fairly and equitably represented by all Americans is a better and stronger force.



Rear Adm. Paula Brown, CEC, USN

"The forward-looking, professional, common-sense, 'Can Do' approach by everyone – CEC officers, chiefs community and Seabees at large – made integration fairly easy."

Rear Adm. Katherine L. Gregory, Commander,
NAVFAC Pacific/Pacific Fleet Civil Engineer

Construimus ☆ Batuimus



BUC Jeremy Stokes, NMCB 28, paints a sign for the Seabee compound on a bulldozer blade, symbolizing the battalion's history and culture of the region, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Photo by EOSN Lori Roberts